



A CUP OF HEALTH WITH CDC

Don't Drink and Drive

Alcohol-Impaired Driving Among Adults – United States, 2012

Recorded: August 4, 2015; posted: August 6, 2015

[Announcer] This program is presented by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

[Dr. Gaynes] Welcome to *A Cup of Health with CDC*, a weekly feature of the *MMWR*, the Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report. I'm your host, Dr. Robert Gaynes.

Nearly one-third of fatalities in car crashes are caused by alcohol-impaired driving.

Amy Jewett is a researcher with CDC's National Center for Injury Prevention and Control. She's joining us today to discuss the dangers of alcohol-impaired driving. Welcome to the show, Amy.

[Amy Jewett] Thank you for having me, Bob.

[Dr. Gaynes] Amy, how many people die in drunk driving accidents?

[Amy Jewett] Too many. Drunk driving was responsible for over 10,000 deaths in 2013.

[Dr. Gaynes] Is the legal blood alcohol limit the same in all states?

[Amy Jewett] Yes, it is the same in all states. If you have a blood alcohol concentration level of .08 or greater, you're breaking the law and putting others at risk. If you're under the age of 21, there is no acceptable level.

[Dr. Gaynes] Is drunk driving more common among any particular group of people?

[Amy Jewett] Men drink and drive more than women. Young men in particular between the ages of 21 and 34 are more likely to drive drunk.

[Dr. Gaynes] What can be done to prevent drunk driving accidents?

[Amy Jewett] There are several things that law enforcement can do. Can actively enforce drunk driving laws and the minimum drinking age laws and having zero tolerance for people under 21. Can also use sobriety checkpoints. This allows police to stop vehicles and check for intoxication. Once a person has been convicted of a DUI; requiring ignition interlocks. These are devices that can be installed in cars to detect alcohol level of the driver. If alcohol is detected, the car will not start.

[Dr. Gaynes] Amy, what recommendation would you give someone who plans to consume alcohol while away from home?

[Amy Jewett] Before you drink, designate a nondrinking driver. Don't let your friends drive impaired and if you have been drinking, get a ride home from a sober driver, call a taxi or similar service, or use public transportation. And if you're hosting a party, remind your guests to plan ahead and designate their sober driver.

[Dr. Gaynes] Where can listeners get more information about alcohol-impaired driving?

[Amy Jewett] Listeners can go to cdc.gov and, in the search box, type “impaired driving.”

[Dr. Gaynes] Thanks, Amy. I’ve been talking today with CDC’s Amy Jewett about the dangers of drinking and driving.

If you’re planning to consume alcohol, don’t drive a motor vehicle. Designate a non-drinking driver *before* you start drinking. If you don’t have a designated driver, call a friend or a taxi, or use public transportation.

Until next time, be well. This is Dr. Robert Gaynes for *A Cup of Health with CDC*.

[Announcer] For the most accurate health information, visit [.cdc.gov](http://cdc.gov) or call 1-800-CDC-INFO.